

6. GENERATION GREEN PAPER (LF)

1. Purpose of the report

To inform Members about the Access Unlimited coalition and Generation Green a £2.5m Green Recovery Challenge Fund grant 16-month project (Dec 2020-March 2021), what this means for the Peak District National Park now and into the future.

Key Issues

- Generation Green is the first funded project of coalition Access Unlimited, formed by YHA in Jan 2020. Its aim is simple; to ensure that there are opportunities for every child and young person to access high quality learning and residential experiences in our National Parks and AONBs. This is set out in an ambitious 5-year project plan, costed at £70million. Future ambition of Access Unlimited set out in Proposals.
- Generation Green is a pioneering project setting up new ways of working, bringing together the 10 English National Parks, and with coalition partners YHA, Field Studies Council, Scouts, Girl Guides and Outward Bounds. The project officer for National Parks is hosted by the Peak District NPA, whilst South Downs NPA look after the financial reporting and are the NP lead delivery partner.
- In December 2020 National Parks England published its Delivery Plan for National Parks for Everyone setting out a shared programme, see *Landscapes for Everyone paper*. Generation Green is a funded project which supports delivery of this plan as set out below:
 - **A more inclusive programme of big walks and adventure** – *Generation Green targeting young people aged 12-26 from north, midlands, coastal and deprived urban areas, reaching young people who are underserved and underrepresented. This is focussed on equity rather than volume of young people accessing NPs and AONBs.*
 - **An opportunity for every child to visit a National Park** – *Generation Green provides 100,000+ opportunities which include micro volunteering, self-guided learning, day visits and overnight experiences in National Parks and AONBs, aim to inspire a love of nature in young people.*
 - **A deeper connection to nature for young people** – *Generation Green supports diversity of access to support pro-environmental behaviours and maximise restorative power of nature for all.*
 - **A progressive set of experiences** – *Generation Green offers multiple pathways of engagement from day visits, to volunteering, training and employment. The grant helps coalition partners retain and create 30 jobs, a range of developmental opportunities for young people including leadership training, internship, 30 kickstart placements, 7 apprenticeships, and 659 skilled volunteer roles.*
 - **Greater public awareness and understanding** - *Utilises 2million+ direct reach of Access Unlimited consortium targeting those who access nature least.*
- The Authority will deliver its commitments to the Delivery Plan and Generation Green project in line with our Corporate Strategy, carried out by new roles Project Manager, Engagement Ranger, Assistant Engagement Ranger, and

with support of the wider Engagement service.

2. Recommendation

For the committee to note the paper and support the actions in section 8

3. How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?

4. Landscapes Review recommendations

While we are still waiting for the Government response to the Landscapes review, Generation Green project works toward several of the recommendations:

Proposal 7: A stronger mission to connect all people with our national landscapes, supported and held to account by the new National Landscapes Service

Proposal 8: A night under the stars in a national landscape for every child

Proposal 9: New long-term programmes to increase the ethnic diversity of visitors

Proposal 10: Landscapes that cater for and improve the nation's health and wellbeing

Proposal 11: Expanding volunteering in our national landscapes

Proposal 26: Reformed governance to inspire and secure ambition in our national landscapes and better reflect society

5. National Park Management Plan

The Generation Green Project and ongoing work of the Access Unlimited coalition links closely to Special quality 3: Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies within reach of millions, Special Quality 6 - An inspiring space for escape, adventure, discovery and quiet reflection and Special Quality 7 - Vital benefits for millions of people that flow beyond the landscape boundary. However, it is by developing a connection with the place that means our visitors will benefit from all 7 special qualities and lead to support and understanding of the natural environment.

It also contributes to Areas of Impact, 4: A National Park for everyone 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding and 6 - Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy.

6. Corporate Strategy

The National Park England's Delivery Plan Landscapes for everyone and Generation Green are directly linked to implementing the Diverse Audience Plan and corporate strategy outcome 'A National Park Loved and supported by diverse audiences'. The key performance indicators(KPI's) below are directly linked to this work:

KPI 11: Increase the proportion of under-represented groups reached

KPI 12: Increase public connection with the Peak District National Park

KPI 14: Rebuild the value of National Park Authority volunteer support

By delivering the actions below:

Implement Diverse Audience Plan – young people	PD Generation Green outputs
Supporting self-led visits using on-line material, training and new interventions to support and empower schools and local communities, supporting responsible visiting with understanding	Creation of NPUK Green Pathways webpage – input local case studies and films, new PD opportunity webpages and input opportunities to YHA Generation Green webpages with online new Nature Connection resources.
Increasing Geographic reach and equality of access	Opportunities targeted at under-represented and under-reached
Champions – reaching beyond our boundaries using on-line material, training and new interventions to support and empower schools and local communities	Online teacher training webinars. Signposting to coalition partner resources and networks.

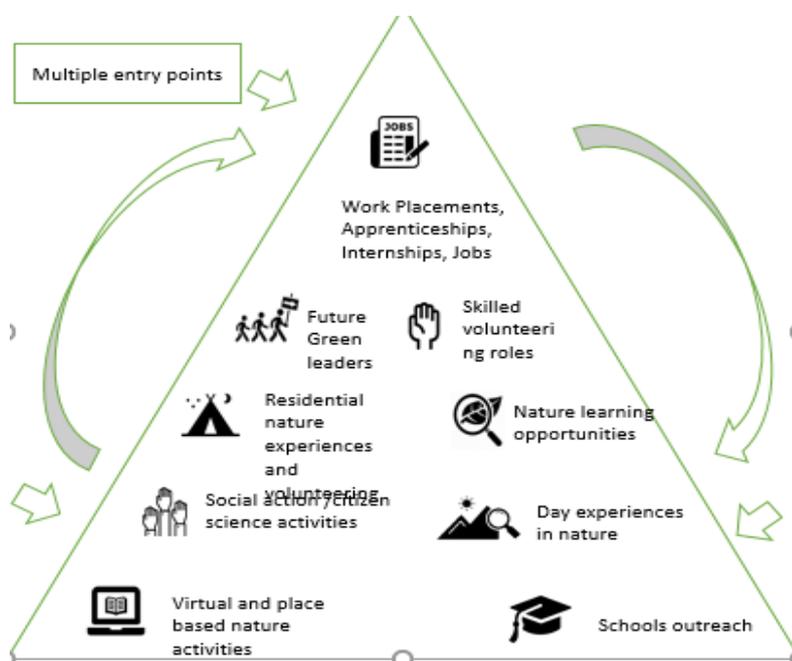
Implement the Volunteer Action Plan	PD Generation Green outputs
A wide range of diverse volunteer roles and opportunities are available across the Park	Recruitment and training of new Youth Engagement Volunteers
A more diverse audience is aware of the volunteering opportunities available in the park and are encouraged/ confident in/ to apply	Delivery of Green Career Skill micro volunteering with colleges, universities and individuals aged 18-26.

7. Background Information

Access Unlimited

Jan 2019: Access Unlimited coalition was formed of not-for-profit school residential and educational providers led by YHA, partners include 10 English National Parks, Girl Guides, Field Studies Council, Scouts, Outward Bounds and YHA.

Dec 2020: Access Unlimited secures a £2.5m Green Recovery Challenge Fund grant for a 16-month project called *Generation Green*.



Generation Green

Project **Generation Green** aims to connect young people to nature, create/save jobs and build an aspirant workforce for a green recovery, through multiple entry points – see pyramid.

Partners and roles:

YHA England and Wales (£637,350) has overall accountability for delivery of the project. YHA will develop the project website, establish and lead a collaborative communication and marketing campaign to engage young people in the project, and is delivering a range of programme activities including

3,900 connecting to nature day and residential experiences for young people, as well as 5 apprenticeships and 30 work placements (linked to Kickstart). YHA is essentially the lead member and the consortium members (listed below) are responsible for jointly delivering the project.

The Scout Association (£378,770) - brings mass reach and community outreach capability. They will recruit c8000 Green Champions to engage c33,000 young people in the programme. Scouts will deliver 1,000 two-night residential experiences and will develop white label activities and resources for use by other partners in their delivery and will be repurposing 7 existing roles and skilling 45 volunteers to support the project's delivery.

The Guide Association (£378,770) - will run a targeted communications campaign to engage girls from deprived and BAME communities. They will train 150 walking leaders and 400 other volunteers to connect more girls to nature. Through them c2500 girls will experience one or more nights under the stars.

The Outward Bound Trust (£306,428) - will deliver activities to 2,000 young people in schools, provide 225 immersive (4 to 18 night) residential experiences and leadership training opportunities for 12 BAME young people and 8 young women. OBT is the lead partner for the project's evaluation.

Field Studies Council (£313,334) – will support virtual, home, school, and place-based learning for 6,000 young people and provide high quality publications for 5,000 participants. FSC will also deliver residential learning opportunities for 400 young people at its study centres and will be taking the programme into schools reaching 1,000 pupils. FSC will support OBT with the project's evaluation and is offering 1 paid internship opportunity.

10 English National Park Authorities (£591,409) – will establish **Green Pathways** as a strategic offer from UK National Parks: inspiring and supporting green economy careers. They will recruit and train Project Manager, 12 new Engagement Rangers, 2 Apprentices and 86 skilled volunteer leaders, together with delivery of green career skills to a new aspirant work force.

Green Pathways is a collection of inspirational programmes that reach out into communities beyond National Parks boundaries and down into the youngest age groups to provide the motivation and route to employment in the Green Economy. They do this through experiences, skills, training and career development opportunities that will live long in the memories of participants.

Three Green Pathways are the National Parks delivery programmes for Generation Green

- **Green Beacons:** employ and train educators and youth leaders to be the inspirational figures that can light the way for young people to work in the Green Economy
- **Green Shoots:** are outreach projects and resources that work predominantly through links to schools and youth leaders to provide inspirational experiences; they plant the seeds of the ambition to work in the Green Economy
- **Green Leaders:** is a training and engagement programme to support young people as leading voices and active participants in the Green Economy and conservation through, for example, working as Young Rangers in National Park

Together the English National Parks will deliver opportunities to over 7,000 young people through the **Green Pathways** programme:

- 2000 young people will experience a residential experiences and social action volunteering projects through collaboration with YHA.
- 550 teacher training opportunities will be delivered in partnerships through 3rd party providers.
- 1,000 young people will experience a residential stay at Exmoor NP residential centre.
- 4,000+ young people will experience day visits and multi-day immersive programmes,

developing a connection to nature and pro environmental behaviours.

- 30 participants engaging in first NPUK youth voice committee residential
- 15,000+ hours contribution from young people to improve visitor infrastructure, habitat monitoring and habitat improvements.

Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive of the South Downs National Park who leads the learning and engagement portfolio for UK National Parks, said: *“This vital project is already transforming lives, allowing young people who may never had the opportunity to visit the countryside to access, enjoy and learn about our wonderful National Parks.*

“We’re already connecting scores of young people to nature through some really inspiring activities, including hands-on conservation and residential trips to breath-taking locations. We know these outdoor learning experiences can spark a lifetime of interest in the environment, inspiring the next generation to meet the challenges of climate and biodiversity with confidence and innovation.

“National Parks have so much to offer in terms of connecting young people to nature and I’m excited to see what 2022 will bring.”

Generation Green in the Peak District

The plan that supports this work has been our Diverse Audience Plan brought to this committee on July 17th 2020(minute reference 23/20). This plan identified the key audiences and principles we would work with. Together with the Volunteer action Plan.

Since this date work has continued to develop this plan with the identified audiences. As an element of this the Access Unlimited coalition has been developed as set out in background information above, and funding sourced through the Green Recovery Challenge Fund which has enabled the activity across NPs including the Peak District activity below.

We have also developed new ways of working: reporting, evaluation plans, comms plans and assets, and are in the process of reviewing this in our work with the NPUK Educators and Outreach group to embed into action plans.

Direct delivery work has been affected by covid19 restrictions, but despite this all project targets have been met, and schools, youth providers and independent young people’s confidence is building, their support and appetite growing, with positive feedback.

Opportunities within the Peak District

Generation Green is a new project in the Peak District National Park set to connect young people to nature – many for the first time – and to cultivate a sense of care for the natural environment. All experiences are designed to grow nature connectedness as a means to: enhance the physical and mental wellbeing of participants; promote more environmentally responsible lifestyle choices; boost attainment in education. Providing opportunities for hands on conservation, leaving a legacy of care. Together with creating pathways to the green economy.

Over the course of the project we will have provided 894 Green Pathway opportunities.

Volunteers

Opportunities to bridge gaps and build a progressive journey as Green Leaders move to become Green Beacons, taking personal action and a lifelong care and support. Locations and activity designed to improve access and equity for young people into volunteering with the Peak District.

- **Junior Rangers ages 16+** - Day sessions and residentials offered to current Junior Rangers aged 16+ as progression journey from Junior Ranger to Volunteer. Supporting their journey as Green Leaders. Providing 52 opportunities for young people.

- **Youth Voice** – The Peak District will host the first NP Youth Voice Committee meeting at a 4 day Residential in February. Bringing together representatives from across 13 NPs.
- **Green Career Skill Volunteers ages 18-26** – new monthly volunteer days and residential stays for individual young people aged 18-26. Providing young people with skills to support a route into employment in the green economy through inspirational experiences, training and career development. Providing 35 opportunities.
- **Youth Engagement Ranger Volunteers ages 18+** – recruitment and training programme for volunteers to support the Engagement Team in connecting young people to nature through school visits and Junior Rangers. Sharing enthusiasm, passion and knowledge to create a spark of inspiration to young people, motivating them on their journey to becoming lifelong supporters of the Peak District National Park. Providing 226 volunteer opportunities. 88 of these are specific skilled training opportunities including hill skills and first aid qualifications.

Young People

Engagement predominantly through schools and colleges to provide inspirational experiences. Activity is targeted at young people aged 12-26 from north, midlands, coastal and deprived urban areas, reaching young people who are underserved and underrepresented (including areas of deprivation, BAME communities or individuals living with a disability)

- **Green Action Programme with Residential stays at YHA's** - fully funded programmes, aiming to offer a series of progressive day visits reaching out into communities, and taking young people on a journey into the National Park with a celebratory residential stay set in inspiring landscapes. Feedback from groups has been really positive:

Without the support of Generation Green these groups would not have been able to access what the Peak District has to offer, and gain a deeper connection to nature. Each group has had opportunity to take part in practical conservation such as tree planting, woodland management, habitat creation and dry-stone walling – leaving their mark on the Peak District landscape.

8. Proposals

The committee support the actions below:

Immediate actions:

1. NPs Generation Green Jan – March 2022

Complete current project activity targets, evaluation and reporting. Activity focus for the final quarter:

- Teacher training
- Youth Voice Residential
- Outdoor Leader training
- Complete residential and day visit bookings
- Complete Green Pathway assets

Longer term actions:

1. Access Unlimited

What we are committed to:

- Generating and seeking further funding to continue the ambition of Access Unlimited 5-year plan.
- Continuing the work, we started ahead of this crisis to provide a joined up set of progressive experiences. Moving children from learning in green spaces close to their home through AONB's and National Parks further afield, and from day visits, residential to independent self-led experiences.
- As trusted providers delivering high quality experiences, working with our rural communities and economy to provide opportunities for access.
- Continuing to seek access to the countryside for those most in need and who would benefit the most.

Our request to government / funders – letter drafted by YHA with expression of interest, Dec 2021:

- Bring forward the funding intended to support the aims of the Landscape Review, to ensure there is funding for young people to access outdoor learning, education and residential in our National Parks
- Continue to work with us as key partners as we open the countryside up for the benefit of the nation and protect rural economies, jobs and supply chains.
- Consider the role of school residential and existing outdoor learning provision in the plans to develop the use of NCS and Youth Investment Fund monies.

2. NP Green Pathways comms plan April and beyond

- Activation of Green Pathways assets and comms plan. Work together with NPUK, NP Comms and Education teams to build awareness and drive targeted audience to assets.

3. Peak District Generation Green activity legacy planning

- Utilise Green Pathways assets, working with comms team to drive audience to self-led visit resources and guidance. Continue to tie into PDNP Diverse Audience Plan.
- Ensure new Youth Engagement Volunteers are supported and managed by wider team in line with the Volunteer Action Plan.
- Seek funding for continuation of Green Career Skills.

Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

9. Financial:

The activities in the current Generation Green project have funding and resources identified to deliver them.

Generation Green April – June 2022

A 3-month extension to Generation Green grant to June 2022 has been proposed to Heritage Fund (Dec 2021), to allow time to maximise on delivery of project activity to the end of March then complete the final phase submitting project evaluation and final report, legacy planning and activation of comms plan to raise awareness of project activity and future ambitions. With extension of budget for Project staff, including Project Manager full time for the duration – this will have a knock on with implications of backfill posts as on secondment.

Future funding for Generation Green / Access Unlimited

An expression of interest letter led by Anita Kerwin-Nye, YHA and supported by coalition partner CEOs including Trevor Beattie, Chief Executive of the South Downs National Park who leads the learning and engagement portfolio for UK National Parks, has been drafted to Defra. For continuation of Access Unlimited ambitions, on a similar scale as Generation Green for a 1 year, or preferable 3-year project.

It is also being considered and scoped out to draft a second Heritage Fund application.

More will be known in the New Year, and appropriate permissions sought with development of

project plans and associated budgets.

10. Risk Management:

Covid 19 has had a big impact on this work and continues to affect delivery and bookings. We are on target with bookings in place for Jan-March, but new variants may impact both delivery staff, residential settings and participants.

Alan Brough, lead Finance reporting and budget claims due to finish post in March before final claims. Lorna will need to work more closely with SDs finance team to ensure completion.

11. Sustainability:

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Authority is bound by the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duties The PDNPA must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the three aims of the general equality duty and:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act explains that the second aim (advancing equality of opportunity) involves, in particular, having **due regard** to the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

This project aims to address the need to involve young people in the life and work of protected landscapes. We know they are underrepresented in visitors and in the staff and volunteers of these valuable places.

12. Climate Change

Nature connection is a key theme running across Generation Green. We are working with University of Derby to evaluate impact of interventions on young people's nature connection. This is a first step towards positive action for Climate Change.

National Parks will contribute 15,000+ hours from young people to improve visitor infrastructure, habitat monitoring and habitat improvements.

Of this Peak District NP have contributed 3,000+ hours of conservation activity including habitat

creation, Access and Rights of way improvement, tree planting, drystone walling, tree guard removal, woodland management. All these activities build pro environmental behaviours and promote National Park messages

- a. Leading the way in sustainable land management
- b. Exemplars in renewable energy
- c. Working with communities

Through provision of volunteer opportunities and training of Green Beacons we are lighting the way to grow nature connection and foster a lifelong love and care for green spaces. Providing opportunities to those living within and on the border of national parks to give back and gain skills.

Through delivery of high-quality engagement with volunteers and young people working with local community groups and partners such as Rural Crimes team, Eastern Moors, Yorkshire Water, National Trust, YHAs, High Peak Council, English Heritage, Youth Action Forum, Outdoor Centres and Alpkit, together we are developing pro environmental behaviours for access to the countryside. Promoting these messages further through the Green Pathways comms plan.

13. Background papers (not previously published)

14. Appendices

- I. Appendix 1 Green Pathways Positioning Document

Lorna Fisher, Project Manager Generation Green, 13 January 2022